

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, GATT

SUBJECT: GATT WORKING PARTY EXAMINATION OF FINNISH EASTERN
EUROPEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

REF: (A) STATE 23185, (B) GENEVA 3437

1. MISSION IS REQUESTED TO REPORT ON PROGRESS OF SCHEDULING
THE FIRST MEETINGS OF THE WORKING PARTY EXAMINATION OF THE
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SUBJECT FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS. IN LINE WITH US SCENARIO

OUTLINED IN REF. A. US WANTS EARLY WORKING PARTY EXAMINATION OF THESE AGREEMENTS (THAT IS BEFORE AUGUST HOLIDAYS) AND FEARS, SHOULD FURTHER DELAY IN SCHEDULING OCCUR, THIS WILL PUSH THE FIRST MEETINGS INTO THE FALL.

2. OUR POSITION, WHICH COINCIDES WITH THAT OF THE EC, IS THAT THE FIRST MEETINGS OF THE WORKING PARTY EXAMINATIONS OF ALL THREE AGREEMENTS SHOULD TAKE PLACE CONSECUTIVELY THE SAME TIME SINCE THE ISSUES ARE SIMILAR AND IT IS LIKELY THAT MANY OF THE SAME INDIVIDUALS WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE EXAMINATIONS. FOR THE REASONS CITED IN REF. B, WE AGREE WITH MIYEION ASSESSMENT THAT WE SHOULD OPPOSE SCHEDULING THE FINNISH-HUNGARIAN AGREEMENT FIRST. MISSION SHOULD ADVOCATE TAKING CZECHOSLOVAKIA FIRST AS WE CONSIDER IT MOST VULNERABLE. SINCE THERE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY OBJECTIVE CRITERIA TO SUPPORT THIS CHOICE (AS IS ALSO TRUE WITH SECRETARIAT'S SUGGESTION THAT HUNGARY GO FIRST) AN ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE WOULD BE TO HAVE ORDER OF SIGNATURE PREVAIL WITH BULGARIA FIRST AND HUNGARY SECOND.

3. AS EXCHANGE OF Q'S AND A'S IS NORMALLY COMPLETED BEFORE FIRST WORKING PARTY MEETINGS, DEPT. WOULD APPRECIATE MISSION REPORTING ON STATUS OF Q AND A PROCEDURE. OUR UNDERSTANDING OF Q AND A PROCEDURE WHICH WAS AGREED UPON BETWEEN THE GATT SECRETARIAT AND INTERESTED CPS EARLIER THIS YEAR WAS THAT TWELVE WEEKS WOULD BE ALLOWED FOR Q'S AND A'S. SINCE THE SIX WEEK PERIOD FOR SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS ENDED MARCH 20, EVEN WITH ADDED TIME ALLOWANCE FOR COLLATING AND DISTRIBUTING THE QUESTIONS, IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE PERIOD FOR REPLYING TO THE QUESTIONS OUGHT TO BE OVER. DEPT. WOULD APPRECIATE PROMPT TRANSMISSION OF GATT DOCUMENTS OUTLINING Q'S AND A'S AS SOON AS THEY ARE AVAILABLE. KISSINGER

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